

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 284

By Carter

A RESOLUTION to honor Kelaokalani Fifita "Kalani" Sitake and welcome him to Tennessee.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in paying tribute to those athletes and coaches who have attained the pinnacle of sporting competition; and

WHEREAS, Kelaokalani Fifita "Kalani" Sitake is the head football coach at Brigham Young University (BYU), where he played under the legendary Coach LaVell Edwards; he holds the distinction of being the first Tongan to serve as a collegiate football head coach; and

WHEREAS, Coach Sitake served a two-year mission for The Church of Latter-day Saints and was redshirted in 1997, before becoming a three-year starter at fullback for the Cougars (1998-2000); and

WHEREAS, a leader on and off the field, he was named BYU's Football Scholar Athlete of the Year in 1998, helped the Cougars win the first Mountain West Conference championship in 1999, and earned BYU's Impact Player of the Year award in 1999; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Kalani Sitake served as team captain and was named BYU's most valuable running back; and

WHEREAS, after his career as a football player was ended by injury, he served as an assistant coach at Eastern Arizona College and Southern Utah University and was a graduate assistant with the BYU team; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Kalani Sitake began his tenure as an assistant coach at the University of Utah; he was eventually promoted to defensive coordinator, thus becoming the first Tongan to serve in that position at an NCAA FBS program; and

WHEREAS, Coach Sitake next served as defensive coordinator and assistant head coach at Oregon State University; and

WHEREAS, Kalani Sitake returned home in December 2015, when he was named head football coach at BYU; and

WHEREAS, on September 3, 2016, he began his head coaching career as BYU faced off against Arizona in the Cactus Kickoff and emerged victorious, 18-16; and

WHEREAS, Coach Sitake and BYU then experienced some growing pains as the Cougars lost their next three games by a combined seven points, but they quickly righted the ship to win their next four games, including a road victory at Michigan State and a homecoming win against Mississippi State; and

WHEREAS, Coach Sitake posted an enviable 8-4 record in his first season as a head coach, with BYU's four losses coming by a combined eight points, and led the Cougars to their twelfth consecutive bowl game; and

WHEREAS, in the Poinsettia Bowl, BYU bested Wyoming to cap Coach Sitake's storybook first season with a perfect ending; and

WHEREAS, Kalani Sitake is visiting Chattanooga to participate in a golf tournament, sponsored by the local BYU alumni chapter, to fund scholarships for area youth to attend BYU; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Kelaokalani Fifita "Kalani" Sitake upon his exemplary career in football, both as a player and coach, and welcome him to Chattanooga and Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.